Development and Initial Validation of the Response to Stressful Experiences Scale (RSES)

NAVY AND MARINE CORPS COMBAT & OPERATIONAL STRESS CONFERENCE 2010:
"TAKING ACTION, MEASURING RESULTS"

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Psychological Resilience

- What is it?
- Why is it important?
- Are we measuring the default?
- Can we teach it?
- Can we train it?
- Can we bottle it up and administer it?

	Pathology	Healthy
High Risk	Vulnerable	Resilient
Low Risk	Unique Stressor	Resistant

Why A New Scale?

- Assess *process* of resilience rather than *state* of being resilient
- Validate in sample known to have exposure to *high-magnitude* stressors
- Additional facets of multi-dimensional construct (i.e., *incremental validity*)

National Center for PTSD
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

N = 1049

1st Battalion 25th Marine
Combat Infantry Unit
New England USMC Reserve

34th Combat Aviation Brigade
Minnesota National Guard

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N = 1049 (Sample Composition)

- Active-Duty, Reserve, & National Guard
- Officer & Enlisted
- USMC, US Navy & US Army
- Multiple Combat Deployments & Non-Deployed
- Combat Infantry, Support, Aviation, Technicians, Medical
- Time in service range [0 – 20+ years]

Reliability

- Elimination of poor performing items
- Result = 22-item scale

- Cronbach's alpha = .91-.93
- Test/retest = .87 (1-week)
- Consistency of factor clusters = .67-.87

Factor Analyses

Best Model = 6 Factor Solution

57% of variability (RMSEA = .04)

1. Cognitive Flexibility
2. Spirituality
3. Active Coping
4. Self Efficacy
5. Meaning-making
6. Restoration

Cognitive Flexibility

... adjusting beliefs about the self, the world, and the future

... confronting fears

... reframing stressful events as opportunities

... overcoming cognitive and behavioral avoidance

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Spirituality

... belief that life has dimension beyond physical

... power greater than the 'self'

... power can guide, shape, influence, and inform experiences

Active Coping

... thoughts, behaviors, emotions

... aimed at altering external or internal sources of stress

Self-efficacy

... expectation of ability to direct own fate

... expectation of managing reactions effectively

... confidence in ability to respond adaptively in response to threat

Meaning-making

... appreciating informational value of stressors

... recognizing stress-related thoughts, behaviors as useful

... living with intentionality

... extracting purpose from suffering and trials

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Restoration

... self-care intended to maintain stability and rejuvenate

... repair of stress related damage

... preparation for anticipated stressors

Validity

- Connor Davidson (CD-RISC): r = .61-.81
- Dispositional Resilience Scale (DRS): r = .38

- MMPI-2 (Neuroticism): r = -.35
- Satisfaction with Life Scale: r = .48

- Unit Cohesion (DRRI): r = .38
- Post-deployment Support (DRRI): r = .56

Validity (continued)

- Beck Depression Inventory: $r = -.30$
- Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9): $r = -.51$
- PTSD Checklist (PCL-M): $r = -.23$ to $-.39$
- RSES and Combat Experiences:

  57% of variance in PTSD symptoms
  (in 2 independent military samples)

Future Directions

- Neural Mechanisms of Optimal Performance (UCSD/Optibrain/NHRC)
- Predictors of Operational Performance in Immersive Training (NHRC/ONR)
- Israeli Defense Force (IDF)
- Civilian sample validation

RSES Development Team

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